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PART I

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by JOHN LeCARRÉ

let through. He was on a bicycle, bent low over the handlebars and he began to pedal furiously. They started the siren and a Vopso shot him 20 yards short of the line. He moved on the ground for a moment, then he was still.

"Poor fellow."

"Precisely," said Leamas.

Fawley didn't like Leamas, and if Leamas knew he was a spy, Fawley was a man who belonged to clubs and wore representative ties, pontificated on the skills of sportsmen and assumed a service rank in office correspondence. He thought Leamas suspect, and Leamas thought him a fool.

They parked near Cambridge Circus, and went together into the hall.

Control shook his hand rather carefully, like a doctor feeling the bones.

"You must be awfully tired," he said apologetically. "do sit down." That same dreary voice, the donnish bar.

Leamas sat down in a chair facing an olive green electric fire with a bowl of water balanced on top of it.

"Do you find it cold?" Control asked. He was stooping over the fire rubbing his hands together. He wore a cardigan sweater and a blue and white shabby brown one. Leamas remembered Control's wife, a stupid little woman called Mandy who seemed to think her husband was in the Coal Board.

He supposed she was in the Coal Board. He went to the desk and pressed some button. "We'll try and get some coffee," he said.

He was shorter than Leamas remembered him; older, just the same. The same affected detachment, the same donnish conceits, the same horror of draughts: courteous according to a formula miles removed from Leamas' experience. The same milk-and-water banality, the same elaborate diffidence, the same humility.

He brought a packet of cigarettes from the desk, gave one to Leamas, and sat down. There was a pause. Finally Leamas said:

"Riemek's dead."

"Yes, indeed," Control declared, as if Leamas had made a good point. "It is very unfortunate. Most . . . I suppose that girl betrayed him—Elika."

"I suppose so," Leamas wasn't going to ask him how he knew about Elika.

And Mundi had him shot," Control added.

"Yes."

Control got up and drifted round the room looking for an ashtray. He found one and put it awkwardly on the floor between their two chairs.

"How did you do it, Mundi?" Control asked. "I mean? You saw it, didn't you? Did you like Riemek—as a man?"

"I suppose so," said Leamas helplessly. "I was upset. They didn't seem much point in going into it," he added.

"Riemek was the last," Control reflected, "the last of a series of deaths. If my memory is right it began with the girl, the one that died in the cinema. Then there was the Dresden man, and the arrests at Jena. Now Paul, Viereck and Landsner—all dead. And finally Riemek." He smiled deprecatingly. "It's quite a heavy rate of execution. I wondered if you'd had enough."

"What do you mean—enough?"

"I wondered whether you were tired. Burnt out." There was a long silence.

"That's up to you," Leamas said at last.

"We have to live without sympathy, don't we? That's impossible of course. We act it to one another, all this hardness; but we aren't like that, really. I mean . . . one can't be out in the cold all the time; one has to come in from the cold . . . you see what I mean?"

Leamas saw. He saw the long road outside Rottum, the long straight road beside the dunes, and the stream of refugees moving along it; he saw the little aeroplane miles away, the procession stop and leap towards it; and the plane coming in, nearly over the dunes, saw the clouds, the meaningless hell, as the bombs hit the road.

"I can't talk like this, Control," Leamas said at last. "What do you want me to do?"

I want you to stay out in the cold a little longer. Leamas said nothing, so Control went on. "The ethic of our work, as I understand it, is based on a single assumption. That is, we are never going to be aggressors. Do you think that's fair?"

Leamas nodded. He said nothing.

"Thus we do disagree things, but we are defensive. That, I think, is still fair. We do disagree things so that ordinary people here and

elsewhere can sleep safely in their beds at night. Is that too romantic? Of course, we occasionally do very wicked things; he grinned like a schoolboy. "And in weighing up the moralities, we rather go in for a little compromise. For example, I mean you can't compare the ideals of one side with the methods of the other, can you, now? I would say that since the war, our methods—ours and those of the opposition—have become much the same. I mean you can't be less ruthless than the opposition, simply because your government's policy is benevolent, can you now?" He laughed quietly to himself: "That would never do," he said.

For heaven's sake, thought Leamas, what is he up to?

"That is why," Control continued, "I think we ought to try and get rid of Mundi . . . if he can manage it."

"Why? We've got nothing left in East Germany, nothing at all. You just said so—Riemek was the last. There's nothing left to protect."

Control sat down and looked at his hands for a while.

"That is not altogether true," he said finally, "but I don't think I need to bore you with the details."

Leamas shrugged.

"Tell me," Control continued, "are you tired of spying? Forgive me if I repeat the question. I mean that's a phenomenon we understand here, you know. Like aircraft designers . . . mental fatigue, I think the term is. Do say if you are."

Leamas remembered the flight home that morning and nodded.

"If you were," Control added, "we would have to find some other way of taking care of Mundi. What I have in mind is a little out of the ordinary."

He got up and took a tray with it. He put the tray on the desk and poured out two cups. Control waited till she had left the room. He stirred his coffee for a while.

"But I don't think I need to bore you with the details."

"Tell me, do you drink a lot? Whiskey and that kind of thing?"

Leamas had thought he was used to Control.

"Not a bit. More than most, I suppose."

Control nodded understandingly. "What do you know about Mundi?"

"He's a killer. He was here a year or two back with the East German Steel Mission. We had an Adviser here then: Maston."

"Quite so."

"Mundi was running an agent, the wife of an F.O. officer, a bit. More than most, I suppose."

"He tried to kill George Smiley. And of course he shot the woman's husband. He is a very distasteful man. Ex Hitler-Vopso and all that kind of thing. Not at all the intellectual kind of Communist. A practitioner of the cold war."

"Like us," Leamas observed dryly. Control didn't smile.

"George Smiley knew the case well. He isn't with us any more, but I think you ought to ferret him out. He's doing things on 17th century Germany. He lives in Chelsea, just behind Sloane Square. Bywater St., do you know it?"

"And Guillam was on the case as well. He's in Satellite Four, on the first floor. I'm afraid everything's changed since your day."

"Yes."

"Spent a day or two with them. They know what I have in mind. Then I wondered if you'd care to stay with me for the weekend. We can talk about things in comfort then. It would be very nice. I think you could make a lot of money out of it. You can have whatever you make."

"Thanks."

"That is, of course, if you're sure you want to . . . do you really feel like anything?"

"If it's a question of destroying Mundi, I'm game."

"Do you really feel that?" Control inquired politely. And then, having looked at Leamas thoughtfully for a moment, he observed: "Yes, I really think you do. But you mustn't feel you have to say it. I mean in our world we pass so quickly out of the register of hate or love—like certain sounds a dog can't hear. That's left in the end is a kind of nausea; you never want to cause suffering again. Forgive me, but isn't that rather what you felt when Karl Riemek was shot? Not hate for Mundi, but a sickening loathing, like a blow on a numb body. . . . They tell me you walked all night—just walked through the streets of Berlin. Is that right?"

"It's right that I went for a walk."

"All night?"

"Yes. . . . I'd like to take a swing at Mundi," he said.

"That's good. Incidentally, if you should meet any old friends in the meantime, I don't think there's any point in discussing this with them. In fact," Control added after a moment, "I should be rather surprised if you didn't let me know you've treated you badly. It's as well to begin as one intends to continue, isn't it?"

chapter 2

IT SURPRISED no one very much when they put Leamas on the shelf. In the main, they put Berlin had been a failure for years, and someone and the Service had been told to keep clear of the national work, where your reflexes often had to be as quick as those of a professional tennis player.

Leamas, the new men were told, was the old school; blood, guts and cricket and Scotch and French. In Leamas's case this happened to be unfair, since he was bilingual in German and English and his Dutch was admirable; he also disliked cricket. But it was true that he had no degree.

Leamas had been on the shelf a few months to run, and they put him in Banking to do his time. Leamas went to seed.

The process of going to seed is generally considered to be a protected one, but in Leamas's case this was not the case. In the full view of his colleagues he was transformed from a man honorably put aside to a resentful, drunken wreck—and all without any undue harshness, even by a personnel department not famed for its philanthropy.

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to sell encyclopaedias to suburban housewives, but he was not a man that housewives liked or understood; they did not want Leamas, let alone his encyclopaedias. Night after night he returned wearily to his flat, his ridiculous sample under his arm. At the end of a week he went to a pub and got very drunk at a cost of 25 shillings, which he could not afford.

They were beginning to know him elsewhere too, the gray, shambling figure from the Mansions. Not a wasted word could he speak, not a friend, neither man, woman nor child, could he have. They guessed he was in trouble, run away from his wife like an ant. They didn't like him in the Street, but they were almost sorry for him. They thought he was sorry too, the way he didn't shave weekends, and his shirts all gubby.

* * *

Finally he took the job in the library. The Labor Exchange had put him on to it each Thursday morning as he drew his unemployment benefit, and he'd always turned it down.

It's the Bayswater Library for Psychic research. It's an endowment. They've got thousands of volumes, all sorts, and they're left a whole lot more. They want another helper.

He took the dose and the slip of paper. "They're an odd lot," Mr. Pitt added, "but then you're not a stayer anyway, are you? I think it's time you gave them a try, don't you?"

It was odd about Mr. Pitt. Leamas was certain he'd seen him before somewhere. At the Circus, during the war.

The library was like a church hall, and very cold. The black oil stoves at either end made it smell of paraffin. In the middle of the room was a cubicle-like witness-box and inside it sat Miss Crai, the librarian.

Miss Crai looked up sharply from her card index, as if she had heard a rude word. "Help? What do you mean, help?"

"Assistant. From the Labor Exchange, Mr. Pitt." He pushed across the counter a mimeographed form with its particular entries in a sloping hand. She picked it up and studied it.

"You are Mr. Leamas." This was not a question, but the first stage of a laborious fact-finding investigation.

"And you are from the Labor Exchange." "No, I was sent by the telephone. They told me you needed an assistant."

"I see." A wooden smile. At that moment the telephone rang; she lifted the receiver and began arguing with somebody, fiercely. Leamas guessed they argued all the time; there were no preliminaries. He listened for a minute or two and then drifted towards the bookshelves. He noticed a girl in one of the alcoves standing on a ladder sorting large volumes.

"I'm the new man," he said, "my name's Leamas."

She came down from the ladder and shook his hand in a friendly manner.

"I'm Liz Gold. How'd you do. Have you met Miss Crai?"

"Yes, but she's on the phone at the moment." "Arguing with her mother I expect. What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. Work." "We're marking at the moment; Miss Crai's started a new index."

She was a tall girl, ungainly, with a long waist and long legs. She wore flat, ballet type shoes to reach her height. Her face, like her hands, had large components which seemed to hide behind plainness and beauty. Leamas guessed she was 22 or 23, and Jewish.

It's just a question of checking that all the books are in the shelves. This is the reference book you see. When you've checked you pencil in the new reference and mark it off on the index."

Leamas nodded and together they walked to the next alcove where a shoe-box full of cards lay on the floor.

She left him there, and after a moment's hesitation he took out a book and looked at the fly-leaf. It was called, "Archaeological Discoveries in the Minor. Volume four." They only seemed to have volume four.

It was 1 o'clock and Leamas was very hungry, so he walked over to where Liz Gold was sitting and said:

"What happens about lunch?" "Oh, I bring sandwiches." She looked a little embarrassed. "You can have some of mine if that would be help. There's no cafe for miles."

Leamas shook his head.

"I'll go out, thanks. Got some shopping to do." It was half past 2 when he came back. He smelt of whiskey. He had one carrier bag full of vegetables and another containing groceries. He put them down in a corner of the alcove and wearily began again on the archeology books. He'd been marking for about ten minutes when he became aware that Miss Crai was watching him.

"Mister Leamas." He was half-way up the ladder, so he looked down over his shoulder and said:

"Do you know where these carrier bags came from?" "They're mine."

"I see. They are yours." Leamas waited. "I regret," she continued at last, "that we do not allow it, bringing shopping in to the library."

"If you only took the normal lunch break," Miss Crai continued, "you would not have time to go away. Neither of us does. Miss Gold or myself; we do not have time to shop."

"Why don't you take an extra half-hour?" Leamas asked, "you'd have time then. If you're pushed you can work another half-hour in the evening. If you're pressed."

She stayed for some moments, just watching him and obviously thinking of something to say. Finally she announced:

"I shall discuss it with Mr. Ironside," and went away.

At exactly half past 5 Miss Crai put on her coat and, with a pointed: "Good night, Miss Gold," left. Leamas guessed she had been brooding on the carrier bags all afternoon. He went in to the next alcove where Liz Gold was sitting on the bottom rung of her ladder reading what looked like a tract.

"Mr. Ironside," Leamas said, "I don't think he exists," she replied. "He's her big gun when she's stuck for an answer. I asked her once who he was. She went all shy and mysterious and said 'never mind.' I don't think he exists."

"I'm not sure Miss Crai does," said Leamas and Liz Gold smiled.

He had become an enemy of Miss Crai, and enemies were what Miss Crai liked. Either she scowled at him or she ignored him, and when he came close, she began to tremble, looking to left and right, either for something with which to defend herself, or perhaps for a line of escape. Occasionally she would take immense umbrage, such as when he hung his moustache on her leg, and she stood on top of it shaking her head and fists, until Liz spotted her and called Leamas. Leamas went over to her and said:

"What's troubling you, Miss Crai? Something wrong with my coat?"

"Nothing," she replied in a breathy, clipped way, "nothing at all."

"Fine," he replied, and went back to his alcove. She quivered all that day, and conducted a telephone call in a stage whisper for half the morning.

"She's telling her mother," said Liz. "She always tells her mother. She tells her about me too."

About three weeks after Leamas began work at the library Liz asked him to supper. She pretended it was an idea that had come to her quite suddenly, at 5 o'clock that evening! she seemed to realize that if she were to ask him for tomorrow or the next day

She tried to tell him she knew; she said to him one evening.

"You must go when you want. I'll never follow you, Alec," and his brown eyes rested on her for a moment: "I'll tell you when," he replied.

Her flat was just a bed-sitting-room and a kitchen. In the sitting-room were two armchairs, a divan bed, and a bookcase full of paperback books, mainly classics which she had never read.

After supper she would talk to him, and he would tell her the things that he thought she should know how much he heard, she didn't care. She would kneel by the bed holding his hand against her cheek, talking.

"Then, one evening she said to him: "Alec, what do you believe in? Don't laugh—tell me." She waited and at last he said:

"I believe an 11 bus will take me to Hammer-smith, I don't believe it's driven by Father Christmas."

"You must believe in something," she persisted: "something like God—I know you do, Alec; you've got that look sometimes, as if you'd got something special to do, like a priest. Alec, don't smile, it's true."

He shook his head.

"Sorry, Liz, you've got it wrong. I don't like Americanism or public schools. I don't like military parades and people who play soldiers." Without smiling he added, "And I don't like conversations about Life."

"That's because you don't want to think, you don't dare! There's some poison in your mind, some hate. You're a fanatic, Alec, I know you are, but I don't know what about. You're a fanatic who doesn't want to connect people, and that's a dangerous thing, like a man who's sworn vengeance or something." The brown eyes rested on her. When she spoke she was frightened by the menace in his voice.

"If I were you," he said roughly, "I'd mind my own business."

And then he smiled, a roughish Irish smile. He hadn't smiled like that before and Liz knew he was putting on the charm.

"What do Liz believe in?" he asked, and she replied:

"I can't be had that easy, Alec." "Later that night they talked about it again. Leamas brought it up—he asked her whether she was religious."

"You've got me wrong," she said, "all wrong. I don't believe in God."

"Then what do you believe in?" "History."

He looked at her in astonishment for a moment, then laughed.

"Oh, Liz . . . oh, no. You're not a bloody Communist." She nodded, blushing like a small girl at his laughter, angry and relieved that he didn't care.

He left her flat in the early morning and turned down empty streets until he reached the park. It was foggy. Some way down the road—not far, 20 yards, perhaps a bit more—stood the figure of a man in a raincoat, short and rather plump. He was leaning against the railings of the park, silhouetted in the shifting mist. Leamas approached, the mist seemed to thicken, closing in around the figure at the railing, and when it parted the man was gone.

chapter 3

THEN one day about a week later, he didn't come to the library. Miss Crai was delighted; by half-past 11 she had told her mother, Liz. Entirely ignored her for the rest of that day, failed to reply when she had promised to tell her, with assiduous application. When the evening came she walked home and cried herself to sleep.

The next morning she arrived early at the library. She somehow felt that the sooner she got there, the sooner Leamas might come; but as the morning dragged on her hopes faded, and she knew he would never come. She had promised never to follow him, but she had promised to tell her; should she go and find him?

She mailed a taxi and gave his address. She handed her way up the dingy staircase and pressed the bell of his door. The bell seemed to be broken. There was nothing. There were three bottles of milk on the mat and a letter from the electricity company. She hesitated a moment, then banged on the door, and she heard the faint groan of a man who rushed down to the flat below, hammered and rang at the door. There was no

JOHN McCARRE is the pseudonym of a former English public schoolfellow, who is now in government service and with a seemingly "inside" view of the operations of the State. One of his two previous novels, *Paranormal*, won first prize in the British Crime Writers' Association Awards for 1961. All three of his books have been reprinted in the United States, and the movie rights to this new novel have been sold to Paramount.

he would forget or just not come. Leamas seemed reluctant to accept, but in the end he did.

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coffee in the Black and White. He looked at book-shops, read the evening papers displayed in the shop windows of newspaper offices, and then quite suddenly, as if he thought had occurred to him at the last minute, he jumped on to the bus. The bus went to Ludgate Hill, where it was held up in a traffic jam near a tube station; he dismounted and caught a tube. He bought a sixpenny ticket, stood in the car and carriage and alighted at the next station. He caught another train to Euston, trekked back to Charing Cross. It was 9 o'clock when he reached the station and it had turned rather cold. There was a long waiting in the forecourt; the driver was fast asleep. Leamas glanced at the number, went over and called through the window:

"Are you from Clements?" The driver woke up with a start and asked,

"Mr. Thomas?"

"No," replied Leamas. "Thomas couldn't come. I'm Amies from Hounslow."

"Hop in, Mr. Amies," the driver replied, and opened the door. They drove west, towards the King's Road. The driver knew the way.

Control opened the door.

"George Smiley's home," he said. "I've borrowed his keys. Come in." Not until Leamas was inside, and the front door closed, did Control put on the hall light.

"I was followed till lunch time," Leamas said. They went into the little drawing-room.

"They picked me up this morning. A man called Ashe." He lit a cigaret. "A pansy. We're meeting again tomorrow."

Control listened carefully to Leamas's story, stage by stage, from the day he hit Ford, the grocer, to his encounter that morning with Ashe.

"How did you find prison?" Control inquired. He might have been asking about a holiday. Leamas had enjoyed his holiday. "I am sorry we couldn't improve conditions for you, provide little extra comforts, but that would never have done."

"Of course not."

"One must be consistent." At every turn one must be consistent. Besides, it would be wrong to break the spell. "I understand you were ill. I am sorry. How long were you in bed?"

"About ten days."

"Very distressing; and a nuisance to you, of course."

There was a very long silence.

"There's a very long line in the Party, don't you?" Control asked quietly.

"Yes," Leamas replied. Another silence. "I don't want her brought into this."

"Why should she be?" Control asked sharply and for a moment, just for a moment, Leamas thought he had penetrated the veneer of academic detachment. "Who suggested she should be?"

"No one," Leamas replied. "I'm just making the point. I know how these things go—all offensive operations. They have by-products, take sudden turns in unexpected directions. You think you've caught one fish and you find you've caught another. I want her kept clear of this."

"Oh, quite, quite," said Control, rising. "I'm neglecting my duties as deputy host. Would you care for a drink?"

"No. I want to get away tonight, Control. Go down to the country and get some exercise. Is the House open?"

"I've arranged a car," he said. "What time do you see Ashe tomorrow—1 o'clock?"

"Yes."

Control gave him a whiskey and began looking idly at the books in Smiley's shelf.

"Why isn't this operation?" Leamas asked.

"He doesn't like the operation," Control replied indifferently. "He finds it distasteful. He sees the necessity but he wants no part in it. His fever." Control added with a whimsical smile. "Is recurrent."

"He didn't exactly receive me with open arms."

"Quite. He wants no part in it. But he told you about Mundi; gave you the background?"

"Mundi is a very hard man," Control reflected. "We should never forget that. And a good intelligence officer."

Control asked Smiley know the reason for the operation. The special interest?

Control nodded and took a sip of whiskey.

"And he still doesn't like it?"

"He isn't a question of moralities. He is like the surgeon who has grown used to blood. He is content that others should operate."

"Tell me," Leamas continued, "how are you so certain this will get us where we want? How do

you know the East Germans are on to it—not the Czechs or the Russians?"

"Rest assured," Control said a little pompously, "that that has been taken care of."

As they got to the door, Control put his hand lightly on Leamas's shoulder.

"This is your last job," he said. "Then you can come in from the cold. About that girl—do you want anything done over her, money or anything?"

"When it's over, I'll take care of myself then."

"Quite. It would be very insecure to do anything now."

"I just want her left alone," Leamas repeated with emphasis. "I just don't want her to be messed about. I don't want her to have a file or anything. I want her forgotten."

He nodded to Control and slipped out into the night air. Into the cold.

* * *

On the following day Leamas arrived 20 minutes late for his lunch with Ashe, and smelt of whisky.

They lunched well, with a lot of drink, and Ashe made most of the running. As Leamas had expected he felt talked about himself, an old trick but not a bad one.

"To be quite frank, I've got on to rather a good thing recently," said Ashe; "free-lancing English features for the foreign press. After Berlin I made rather a mess of things at first—the Corporation would not want to contract me, so I took on running a dreary toffee-shop weekly about hobbies for the over-sixties. Can you imagine anything more frightful? That went under in the first printing strike, so I came to you for help. I'm relieved. I mean I went to live with my mama in Cheltenham for a time, she runs an antique shop, does very nicely thank you, as a matter of fact. Then I got a letter from Sam. He said, 'Leamas, Kievev, Sam's actually, who was starting up a new agency for small features on English life specially slanted for foreign papers. Sam had a new gimmick, though; he sold the stuff already translated and you know, it makes a hell of a difference. Sam's gambit was to get in touch with the editors direct—he traipsed round Europe like a gypsy, poor thing, but it's paid hands down.'"

Ashe paused, waiting for Leamas to accept the invitation to speak about himself, but Leamas ignored it.

"Was he in Berlin too?"

"No. He knows Germany well, but he's never lived in Berlin. He did a bit of devilish in Bonn, free-lance stuff. You might have met him. He's a dear."

"Don't think so." A pause.

"I forget what we were doing in Berlin. Weren't you one of the mysterious cold warriors?" My God, thought Leamas, you're stepping things up a bit.

"I was," said Ashe. "I was in the bloody, bloody, bloody, bloody Office boy for the bloody Yanks, like the rest of us."

"You know," said Ashe, as if he had been turning over a new idea over for some time. "You ought to meet Sam. You'll like him," and then, all of a sudden, "You said 'I don't even know where to get hold of you!'"

"You can't," Leamas replied listlessly.

"I don't get you, old chap. Where are you staying?"

"Around the place. Roughing it a bit. I haven't got a job. Blokes wouldn't give me a proper pension. I'm all right for a bit," Leamas said, tapping at the pocket which contained the envelope.

"But you can't just throw yourself away. Alce! You speak German like a native. I remember you. You know all sorts of things about the place."

"I've done all sorts of things. Selling encyclopaedias for some bloody American firm, sorting books in a psychic library, punching work tickets in a glue factory. What else the hell can I do?"

He wasn't looking at Ashe but at the table before him, his agitated lips moving quickly. Ashe responded to his animation, leaning forward across the table, speaking with emphasis and triumph.

"But Alce, you need contacts, don't you see? I know what it's like. I've been on the headline myself. If I hadn't met Sam at Poznan five years ago I'd be out of the business. Look Alce, you must stay with me for a week or so. We'll ask Sam round and perhaps one or two of the old press boys from Berlin if any of them are in town."

"I can't write," said Leamas. "I couldn't write a bloody thing," Ashe had his hand on Leamas' arm. "Now, don't fuss," he said soothingly; "let's just take things one at a time."

Ashe had a flat in Dolphin Square. It was just

what Leamas had expected—small and anonymous with a few hastily assembled curios from Germany: beer mugs, a peasant's pipe and a few pieces of second-hand nymphenburg.

"I've got a spot of shrapnel with my mother in Cheltenham," he said. "I just use this place mid week. It's pretty handy," he added deprecatingly. They fixed the camp bed up in the tiny drawing-room. It was about 4.30.

"How long have you been here?" asked Leamas. "Oh—about a year or more."

Ashe made tea and they drank it. After tea Ashe said, "I'll go out and get a spot of shopping before the shop closes, then we'll decide what to do about everything. I might give Sam a tinkle later this evening—I think the sooner you get together the better. Why don't you get some sleep—you look all right."

Leamas nodded. "It's bloody good of you"—he made an awkward gesture with his hand, "—all this. Ashe gave him a pat on the shoulder, picked up his army mantel and left.

As soon as Leamas reckoned Ashe was safely out of the building, he put the front door of the flat carefully on the latch and made his way downstairs to the centre hall where there were two telephone booths. He dialled a Maids Way number and asked for Mr. Thomas' secretary. Immediately a girl's voice said, "Mr. Thomas' secretary speaking."

"I'm ringing on behalf of Mr. Sam Kievev," Leamas said, "he has accepted the invitation and hopes to contact Mr. Thomas personally this evening."

"I'll pass that on to Mr. Thomas. Does he know where to get in touch with you?"

"Dolphin Square," Leamas replied, and gave the address. "Goodbye."

After making some inquiries at the reception desk he returned to Ashe's flat, and sat on the camp bed looking at his clasped hands. After a while he lay down. He decided to accept Ashe's advice and get some rest. As he closed his eyes he remembered Liz lying beside him in the flat in Bayswater, and he wondered vaguely what had become of her.

He was woken up by Ashe, accompanied by a small, dark, pale girl with long, grey hair, a swart back and a double-breasted suit. She spoke with a slight central European accent, German perhaps, it was hard to tell. He said his name was Kievev—Sam Kievev.

They had a gin and tonic, Ashe doing most of the talking. It was just like old times, he said, in Berlin.

Dinner was very good. Kievev opened up a little on the second bottle of wine. He'd just come back from a tour of West Germany and France. Kievev played it, Leamas reflected, very long. He conveyed to perfection a man who suspected that he was about to be asked a favor, and was not easily won.

After dinner Ashe said, "I know a place in Wardour Street—you've been there, Sam. They do you all right there. Why don't we summon a barouche and go along?"

"Just a minute," said Leamas, and there was something in his voice which made Ashe look at him. "I don't want anything with you? Who's paying for this jolly?"

"I am," said Ashe quickly. "Sam and I."

Leamas seemed to be going to say something else, and then he changed his mind. Ashe looked worried, not offended, and Kievev as inscrutable as before.

Leamas refused to speak in the taxi. Ashe attempted some conciliatory remark and he just shrugged it off. They arrived at Wardour Street and dismounted, neither Leamas nor Kievev making any attempt to pay for the cab. Ashe led them past a shop window full of "girlie" magazines, down a narrow, dark, shabby street, and then, at the end, a tawdry neon sign: "Pussywillow Club. Members Only."

Ashe pressed the bell. The door was at once opened by a very large man in a white shirt and black trousers.

Ashe took a buff card from his wallet and handed it over.

"I've got to pay a quid a head temporary membership. Your recommendation, right?" He held out the card and as he did so, Leamas stretched past Ashe and took it. He looked at it for a moment, then he handed it back to Ashe.

Taking two pounds from his hip pocket Leamas put them into the waiting hand of the man at the door.

"Two quids," said Leamas, "for the guests."

and ignoring the astonished protests of Ashe he guided them through the curtained doorway into the dimly lit hallway of the Club. He turned to the doorman.

"Find us a table," said Leamas, "and a bottle of Scotch. And see we're left alone." The doorman hesitated for a moment, decided not to argue, and escorted them downstairs.

They got a table on their own at the back of the room. A waiter brought a bottle and three tumblers and they waited in silence as he poured a little whiskey into each glass. This done, Leamas leant across the table and said to Ashe: "Now perhaps you'll tell me what's going on?"

"What do you mean?" Ashe sounded uncertain. "What do you mean, Alec?"

"You followed me from prison the day I was released," he began quietly, "with a bloody little story of meeting me in Berlin. You gave me money you didn't owe me. You've bought me expensive meals and you're putting me up in your flat."

Ashe colored and said, "If that's the . . ."

"Don't interrupt," said Leamas fiercely. "Just damn well wait till I've finished, do you mind?"

"Your membership card for this place is made out for someone called Murphy. Is that your name?"

"No, it is not."

"Then why," Leamas persisted ruthlessly, "is Murphy registered as the tenant of your flat?"

It was Kiever who finally spoke. "It was Kiever who finally spoke."

"You run along home," he said to Ashe. "I'll look after this."

Leamas watched the floor show in silence. Leamas and Kiever, Kiever said that he was still very angry.

"Perhaps you'll tell me why that cissy picked me?" Leamas asked.

"By all means, I'll tell him to. I want to make you a proposition, a journalistic proposition."

There was a pause.

"Journalistic," Leamas repeated. "I see."

"I run an agency, an international feature service. It pays well — very well — for interesting material."

"Who publishes the material, Kiever?"

"International clients. I have a correspondent in Paris who disposes of a good deal of my stuff. Often I don't even know who does publish, I confess. He adds with a disclaimer, 'I don't have to don't awfully care. They pay and they ask for more. They're the kind of people, you see, Leamas, who don't fuss about awkward details, they pay promptly, and they're not going to put in a crochety bug for instance, where no one bothers about things like tax."

Leamas said nothing. He was holding his glass with both hands, staring into it.

They're rushing their fences, Leamas thought; it's decent. Tactically, he reflected, they're right to rush it. I'm on my uppers, prison experience still fresh, social resentment strong. I'm an old hand. I don't need breaking in. I don't have to pretend they've offended my honor as an English gentleman. On the other hand they would expect practical objections. They would expect him to object for his Service pursued traitors as the eye of God followed Cain across the desert.

And finally, they would know it was a gamble. They would know that Leamas had made the decision can make nonsense of the best-planned espionage approach; that cheats, liars and criminals may resist every blandishment while respectable gentlemen have moved to appalling treasons by watery cabbage in a departmental canteen.

"They'd have to pay a hell of a lot," Leamas muttered at last. Kiever gave him some more whiskey.

"They are offering a down-payment of £5,000. The money is already lodged at the Banque Cantonale in Bern. On production of a suitable identification, with which my clients will provide you, you can draw the money. Now I shall reserve the right to put questions to you over the period of one year on payment of another £5,000. They will assist you with any . . . resettlement problems that may arise."

"How soon do you want an answer?"

"Now. You are not expected to commit all your reminiscences to paper. You will meet my client and I will arrange to have the material . . . ghost written."

"Where am I supposed to meet him?"

"We left for everybody's sake it would be simplest to meet outside the United Kingdom. My client suggested Holland."

"I haven't got my passport," Leamas said dully.

"I took the liberty of obtaining one for you," Kiever replied suavely; nothing in his voice or his manner indicated that he had done other than negotiate an adequate business arrangement. "We're flying to the Hague tomorrow morning at 9.45. Shall we go back to my flat and discuss any other details?"

Kiever paid and they took a taxi to a rather good address not far from St. James's Park.

Kiever's flat was luxurious and expensive, but its contents somehow gave the impression of having been hastily assembled.

"What do you mean?" Ashe asked. "I paid for by the great Worker State?"

"Shut up," said Kiever savagely. He's on edge, too, thought Leamas.

chapter 4

IT WAS cold that morning; the light mist was damp and gray, pricking the skin. The airport remained lifeless of the machines, half hidden in the fog, waiting patiently for their masters; the resonant voices and their echoes, the sudden shout and the incongruous clip of a girl's heels on a stone floor, the roar of an engine that they checked at your elbow. Everywhere that air of conspiracy which generates among people who have been up since dawn — of superiority almost, derived from the common experience of having seen the night disappear and the morning come.

Kiever had provided Leamas with luggage. It was a nice detail: Leamas admired it. Passengers without luggage attract attention; they checked at the airline desk and followed the signs to passport control. There was a ludicrous moment when they lost the way and Kiever was rude to a porter. Leamas exposed Kiever's ignorance about his passport — he hadn't been, thought Leamas, there's nothing wrong with it.

The passport officer was a youngish, little man without an Intelligence Corps tie and some mysterious badge in his lapel.

"Going to be away for a long time, sir?" he asked Leamas.

"A couple of weeks," Leamas replied.

"You'll want to watch it, sir. Your passport's due for renewal on the 31st."

"I know," said Leamas.

They walked side by side into the passengers' waiting room. On the way Leamas said: "You're a suspicious old, aren't you, Kiever," and the other laughed quietly.

"Can't have you on the loose, can we? Not part of the contract," he replied.

The formalities at the airport at The Hague provided no problem. Kiever seemed to have recovered from his anxieties.

They walked from the customs shed along the corridor to the reception hall on the other side of the airport buildings. Kiever led the way to the main exit, through the little groups of travellers staring vaguely at kiosk displays of scent, cameras and fruit.

A car was waiting for them in the car park, a Volkswagen with a Dutch registration, driven by a woman who ignored them. She drove slowly, always stopping if the lights were amber, and Leamas guessed she had been briefed to drive that way and that they were being followed by a motor. He knew The Hague quite well from the war, and guessed they were travelling northwards towards Scheveningen. Soon they had left the suburbs behind and were approaching a colony of villas bordering the dunes along the sea front.

Here they stopped at a small cream-colored bungalow. Leamas glanced down the road which they had just travelled: 300 yards or so. He saw a car, a Fiat perhaps, or a Peugeot, had parked. A man in a raincoat was getting out.

He was wearing a macintosh with leather buttons. He was about Leamas's height, but older. Leamas put him at about 55. His face had a hard, gray hue and sharp furrows; he might have been a soldier. He held out his hand.

"My name is Peters," he said. The fingers were slim and polished.

"Did you have a good journey?"

"Yes," said Kiever quickly. "Quite uneventful."

"Mr. Leamas and I have a lot to discuss; I do not think we need you, Sam. You could take the Volkswagen back to town."

Kiever smiled. Leamas saw the relief in his smile.

"Goody, Leamas," said Kiever, his voice jocular; "good luck, old man."

Leamas nodded, ignoring Kiever's hand. Heavy lace curtains hung on the window, ornately fringed and draped. The window sill was covered with pot plants. The room was heavy, pseudo-antique. On a sideboard there was whiskey and soda. Peters went over to it and mixed them both a drink.

"Look," said Leamas suddenly, "from now on I can do without the goodwill; do you follow me? We both know that there are good, both professionals. You've got a paid device, good luck to you and heaven's sake, please, pretend you're in love with me."

He sounded on edge, uncertain of himself. Peters nodded, "Kiever told me you were a professional, but he observed dispassionately. The added without smiling. "After all, why else does a man attack tradesmen?"

Leamas guessed he was Russian, but he wasn't sure. His English was superb, he had heard the case and habits of a man long used to civilized comforts.

"They sat at the table."

"Kiever told you what I am going to pay you?"

Peters inquired.

"Yes. Fifteen thousand pounds to be drawn on a Bern bank."

"Yes."

"He said you might have follow-up questions during the next year," said Leamas. "You would pay another 5,000 if I kept myself available."

Peters nodded.

"I don't accept that condition," Leamas continued. "You know as well as I do it wouldn't work. I want to draw the 15,000 and get clear. Your people have a right to know what they're getting, so have mine. I'm not going to sit on my fanny in St. Moritz while you roll up every network I've given you. They're not fools; they'd know who to look for. For all you know I know they're on to us."

Peters nodded. "You could, of course, come somewhere . . . safer, couldn't you?"

"Behind the Curtain?"

"Yes."

Kiever just shook his head and continued: "I reckon you'll need about three days for a preliminary interrogation. Then you'll want to refer back for a detailed brief."

"Not necessarily," Peters replied.

Leamas looked at him with interest: "I see," he said, "they've sent the expert. Or isn't Moscow Centre in on this?"

Peters was silent; he was just looking at Leamas, taking him in. At last he picked up the pencil in front of him and said:

"Shall we begin with your war service?"

Leamas shrugged.

"It's up to you."

It was in the Engineers in 1939, I was finishing my training when a notice came round inviting inquiries to apply for specialist service abroad. I had Dutch and German and a good deal of French and a little of the others, so I applied. I knew Holland well; my father had a machine tool agency at Leiden; I'd lived there for nine years. I had the usual interviews and went off to a secret service office where they taught me the usual monkey tricks."

"Who was running that set-up?"

"I didn't know till later. Then I met Steed-Aspey, and an Oxford don called Fielding. They were running it. In '41 they got me to Germany and I stayed there nearly two years. We lost agents quicker than we could find them in those days — it was bloody murder. Holland's a wicked country for that kind of thing. You get no money, no country, nowhere out of the way you can keep a headquarters or a radio set. I got out in '43 and had a couple of months in England, then I had a go at Norway. In '44 they got me to Germany again. They paid me off and I came over here again, to Holland, to try and catch up in my father's old business. That was no good, so I joined up with an old friend of mine, a truck agent, a bus driver, in Bristol. That lasted 18 months then we were sold out. Then out of the blue I got a letter from the Department: Would I like to go back? By late '49 was back on the pay, on a token service of course — reduction of pension rights and the usual crapping."

There was a knock at the door and the woman came in with a tray, an enormous meal of cold meats and bread and butter. Peters pushed his notes aside

and they ate in silence. The interrogation had begun.

Lunch was cleared away. "So you went back to the Circus," said Peters. "Which section?"

"Satellites Four. I was there from February '50 to May '51."

"Who were your colleagues?"

"Peter Guillam, Brian de Grey and George Smiley. Smiley left us early '51 and went over to Counter Intelligence. In May '51 I was posted to Berlin. D.C. Agency, Sector of Area. That meant all the operational work."

"Who did you have under you?" Peters was writing swiftly. Leamas guessed he had some home-made shorthand.

"Who was, Sorrow and De Jong. De Jong was killed in a traffic accident in '59. We thought he was murdered but we could never prove it. They all ran hawks and I was in charge. Do you want details?" he asked dryly.

"Of course, but later. Go on."

"It was late '54 when we landed our first big fish in Berlin: Fritz Feger, second man in the DDR Defence Ministry. Up till then it had been heavy going—but in November '54 we got on to the FDR. He lasted almost exactly two years then one day we never heard any more. I hear he died in prison. It was another three years before we found out he had been touched. Then, in 1957, Karl Riemekamp turned up. Karl was on the Praesidium of the East German Communist party. He was the best agent I ever knew."

"He is now dead," Peters observed.

"A look of something like shame passed across Leamas' face:

"I was there when he was shot," he muttered. "He had a mistress who came over just before he died and told her everything. She knew the whole damned network. No wonder he was blown."

"We'll return to Berlin later. Tell me this. When Karl died you flew back to London. Did you remain in London for the rest of your service?"

"No, that there was of it, yes. Banking section; supervision of age salaries; whereas payment for clandestine purposes. A child could have managed it. We got our orders and we signed the drafts. Occasionally there was a security headache."

"Were agents described? By cover names?"

"By figures. The Circus calls them combinations. Every network was given a combination: Every agent was described by a suffix attached to the combination. Karl's combination was eight A stroke one."

Leamas was sweating. Peters watched him closely, appraising him like a professional gambler across the table. What was Leamas worth? What would attract him, what would repel him? What did he hate, above all, what did he know? Could he keep his best card to the end and sell it dear? Peters didn't think so: Leamas was too much of a loose to monkey around. He was a man at odds with himself, a man who knew one life, one confession, and had betrayed them, Peters had seen it before. He had seen it, even in men who had undergone a complete ideological reversal, who in the next hours might have turned their backs on all and alone, compelled by the internal power of their convictions, had betrayed their calling, their families, their countries. Even they, filled as they were with new zeal and new hope, had had to struggle against the stigma of treachery: even they wrestled with the almost physical anguish of saying that which they had been trained never, never to reveal. It was a situation of which they were both aware; thus Leamas had fiercely rejected a human relationship with Peters, for his pride precluded it. Peters knew that for those reasons, Leamas would lie; he perhaps only by omission, but lie all the same. His pride, fierce defiance or through the sheer perversity of his profession; and he, Peters, would have to nail the lies. To all that, Peters added the capricious variety of an alcoholic wreck.

"I think," he said, "we will now take your Berlin service in more detail. That should be from May 1951 to March 1961. Have you that?"

Peters had an odd face, expressionless and gray. The color must have left it long ago—perhaps in some prison in the early days of the Revolution—and now his features were formed and Peters would tell him that till he lived in Berlin he had known what Peters' real name was, whether he was married. There was something very orthodox about him which Leamas liked. It was the orthodoxy of streets of confusion. If Peters lied there would be a reason. The lie would be a calculated, neces-

sary lie, far removed from the fumbling dishonesty of a spy.

Ashe, Kiever, Peters; that was a progression in quality, in authority, which to Leamas was axiomatic of the hierarchy of an intelligence network. It was also, he suspected, a progression in ideology. Ashe was a mercenary, Kiever the fellow traveler, and now Peters, for whom the end and the means were identical.

It had taken a long time to build a decent East Zone network from Berlin, Leamas expatiated. For a professional it was a nightmare. Dozens of agencies, half of them penetrated by the opposition, thousands of loose ends; too many leads, too few sources, too little space to operate. They had their break with Feger in 1954, true enough. But by '56 when every Service department was screaming for high-grade intelligence, they were becalmed. They needed the real thing—and they had to wait another three years before they got it.

Then one day De Jong went for a picnic in the woods on the edge of East Berlin. He had a British military number plate on his car, which he parked, locked, in an unmade road beside the canal. After the picnic his children ran on ahead, carrying the basket. When they reached the car they stopped, hesitated, dropped the basket and ran back. Somebody had forced the car door—the handle was broken. The car was slightly damaged. De Jong's camera was still there, so was his coat, so were some parcels belonging to his wife. On the driving seat was a tobacco tin, and in the tin was a small nickel cartridge. De Jong knew exactly what it contained. It was the film cartridge of a subminiature camera, probably a Minox.

De Jong drove home and developed the film. It contained the minutes of the last meeting of the Praesidium of the East German Communist party, the SED. But it also coincided there was desperately from another source; the photographs were genuine.

Leamas took the case over then. He was badly in need of a success. He'd produced virtually nothing since arriving in Berlin, and was going past the usual age limit for full time operational work. Exactly a week later he took De Jong's car to the same place and went for a walk.

But when he returned there was nothing in the car save a note to West Berlin, kicking himself for being a damned fool; the President was not due to meet for another fortnight. Three weeks later he borrowed De Jong's car and took \$1,000 in tin in a picnic case. He left the car unlocked for two weeks, but he returned with the tin and the tin in the glove compartment. The picnic case had gone.

The films were packed with first grade documentary stuff. In the next six weeks he did it twice more, and the same thing happened.

Leamas knew he had hit a gold mine. He gave the source the cover name of "Mayfair" and sent a pessimistic letter to London. Leamas knew that if he gave London half an opening they would control the case and direct which was desperately anxious to avoid. This was probably the only kind of operation which could save him from superannuation, and it was just the kind of thing that was big enough for London to take to getting going for itself. Leamas worked like a madman for three weeks. He poured the personality files of each member of the Praesidium. He drew up a list of all the possible staff who might have had access to the minutes.

Confronted with the almost impossible task of identifying an informant from the incomplete records of 31 candidates, Leamas returned to the original material, which, he said, was something he should have done earlier. He found that for none of the photostat minutes he had so far received were the pages numbered, that none was stamped with a security classification, and that in the second and fourth copy words were crossed out. He was in a quandary. He came finally to an important conclusion: That the photo copies related not to the minutes themselves, but to the draft minutes. This placed the source in the Secretariat and the Secretariat was very close to the Praesidium.

Leamas returned to the personality index. There was a man called Karl Riemekamp in the Secretariat, a former corporal in the Medical Corps, who had served three years as a prisoner of war in England. He had been living in Berlin since the war, the Russians overran it, and he had never heard of her since. He was married and had one daughter named Carla.

Leamas decided to take a chance. He found out from London Riemekamp's prisoner of war number,

which was 29012, and the date of his release which was November 10, 1945. He found the East German children's book of science fiction and wrote in the fly leaf in German in an adolescent hand: "This book belongs to Carla Riemekamp, born December 10, 1945, in Bielefeld, North Devon. Signed Moon-spacework 19012," and underneath he added, "Applicants wishing to make space flights should present themselves for instruction to C. Riemekamp in person. An application form is enclosed. Long live the People's Republic of Germany."

He ruled some lines on a sheet of writing paper, made columns for name, address and age, and wrote at the bottom of the page:

"Each candidate must be interviewed personally. Write to the above address, and when and where you wish to be met. Applications will be considered in seven days. C.R."

He put the sheet of paper inside the book. Leamas drove to the usual place, still in De Jong's car, and left the book on the passenger seat with five used \$100 bills inside the cover. When Leamas returned the book had gone, and there was a tobacco tin on the seat instead. It contained three copies of the minutes developed the night before. One film contained as usual the minutes of the Praesidium's last meeting; the second showed a draft revision of the East German's relationship to Comecon and the third, a breakdown of the East German Intelligence Service, complete with functions of departments and details of personalities.

Peters interrupted: "Just a minute," he said. "Do you mean to say all this intelligence came from Riemekamp?"

"Why not? You know how much he saw." "It's scarcely possible," Peters observed, almost to himself.

"When you sent all this material back to the Circus, they never suggested that even for a man in Riemekamp's position, intelligence was phenomenally comprehensive?"

"No." "Remarkable," Peters observed dryly. "I'm sorry—do go on. I did not mean to anticipate you."

Exactly a week later, Leamas continued, he drove to the canal and this time he felt nervous. As he turned into the unmade road he saw three bicycles parked in the grass along the edge of the canal, three men fishing. He got out of the car as usual and began walking towards the line of trees on the other side of the field. He had gone about 20 yards when he heard a sound. He turned and caught sight of one of the men beckoning to him. The other two had turned and were looking at him too.

Leamas stepped 10 yards from the centre man. "You know something," Leamas asked.

"Are you Leamas?" He was a small, plump man, very steady. He spoke English.

"Yes." "What is your British national identity number?"

"PRT stroke L 58003 stroke one."

"You know as well as I do who he was," said Leamas wearily, "third man in the Ministry of the Interior, Secretary to the SED Praesidium, head of the Co-ordinating Committee for the Protection of the People. I suppose that was how he knew about De Jong and me; he'd seen our counter intelligence files in the Ministry of the Interior. He strings to his bow: the Praesidium, straightforward internal political and economic reporting and access to the files of the East German Security Service."

"But only limited access. They'd never give an outsider the run of all their files," Peters insisted.

Leamas shrugged. "They did," he said.

"How much did you tell London?" "Everything I could get my hands on," then the Circus told the Departments. After that," Leamas added venomously, "it was only a matter of time before it pucked up. With the Departments at their backs, London got greedy. They began pressing us for more, wanted to give him more money. Finally we had to suggest to Karl that he recruit other sources, and we took them on to form a network."

"How much did you get out of him?"

Leamas hesitated. "How much? Christ, I don't know. It lasted an unnaturally long time. I think he was blown long before he was caught. The standard dropped in. It was a few months, living in Berlin, he was respected, then he was caught. He was a good man, but he was then and kept him away from the go state."

"Altogether, what did he give you?" Peters persisted.

Piece by piece, Leamas recounted the full extent of all Karl Riemekamp's work. His memory

was, Peters noted approvingly, remarkably precise considering the amount he drank. He could give dates and names, he could remember the reaction from London, the nature of corroboration where it existed. He could remember sums of money demanded and paid, the details of the conscription of other agents into the network.

"And the Circus never told you to go into it with him, exactly how and when he saw all this stuff?"

"No," snapped Leamas, "Riemeck was touchy about that, and London was content to let it go."

"Well, well," Peter mused.

"After a moment Peters said: 'You heard about that woman, innately?'"

"What woman?" Leamas asked sharply.

"Karl Riemeck's mistress, the one who came over to West Berlin the night Riemeck was shot." "Will?"

"She was found dead a week ago. Murdered. She was shot from a car as she left her flat."

"It used to be my flat," said Leamas mechanically.

"Perhaps," Peters suggested, "she knew more about Riemeck's network than you did."

"What the hell do you mean?" Leamas demanded.

Peters shrugged.

"It's all very strange," he observed. "I wonder who killed her."

When they had exhausted the case of Karl Riemeck, Leamas went on to talk of other less spectacular agents, then of the procedure of his Berlin office, its communications, its staff, its secret ramifications — flats, transport, recording and photographic equipment. They talked long into the night and throughout the next day and when at last Leamas stumbled into bed the following night he knew he had betrayed all that he knew of Allied Intelligence in Berlin.

One thing puzzled him: Peters' insistence that Karl Riemeck must have had help—must have had a high-level collaborator. Control had asked him the same question—he remembered now—Control had asked about Riemeck's access. How could they be so sure Karl hadn't managed alone? He'd had helpers, of course; like the guards by the canal the night Leamas met him. But they were small beer—Karl had told him about them. But Peters and Peters, after all, would know precisely how much Karl had been able to get his hands on—Peters had refused to believe Karl had managed alone. On this point, Peters and Control were evidently agreed.

Perhaps it was true. Perhaps there was somebody else. Perhaps this was the Special Interest which Control was so anxious to protect from Mundt. That would mean that Karl Riemeck had collaborated with this special interest and provided what both of them had together obtained. Perhaps that was what Control had spoken to Karl about, alone, that evening in Leamas' flat in Berlin.

Anyway, tomorrow would tell. Tomorrow he would play his hand.

He wondered who had killed Elvira. And he wondered why they had killed her. Of course—here was a point, here was a possible explanation—Elvira, knowing the identity of Riemeck's special collaborator, had been murdered by that collaborator. . . . No, that was too far-fetched. It overlooked the difficulty of causing a false tip to West; Elvira had after all been murdered in West Berlin.

He wondered why Control had never told him Elvira had been murdered. So that he would react suitably when Peters told him? It was useless speculating. Control had his reasons; they were usually so tortuous it took you a week to work them out.

As he fell asleep he remembered Liz.

chapter 5

PETERS arrived at 8 o'clock the next morning, and without ceremony they sat down at the table and began.

"So you came back to London. What did you do there?"

"What did you do to with you?"

"They said at first I could hang around in London and wait till I was qualified for a proper pension. I told them that if they were so keen to chuck money at me why didn't they do the obvious and court me all my time in the States, or at least about broken service. Then they got cross when I told them that. They put me in Banking."

He lit a cigaret. Peters nodded.

"It was a dreary set-up. Sat on my behind in the same room as a couple of women. We just pushed paper. A letter came down from Finance: 'the payment of \$700 to so and so is authorized with effect from so and so. Kindly get on with it—' That was the gist of it. Thursday and Friday would kick it about a bit, file it, stamp it and I'd sign a cheque or get the bank to make a transfer."

"What bank?"

"Blatt and Rodney, a chichi little bank in the City. There's a sort of theory in the Circus that Etionians are discreet."

"In fact, then, you knew the names of agents all over the world?"

"Not necessarily. That was the cunning thing. I'd sign the cheque, you see, or the order to the bank, but we'd leave a space for the name of the payee. The covering letter or what have you was all signed and then the file would go back to Special Despatch."

"Who are they?"

"They're the general holders of agents' particulars. They put in the names and posted the order. Bloody clever. I must say."

Peters looked disappointed.

"You mean you had no way of knowing the names of the payees?"

"Not usually, no," Leamas got up. "I've made a list," he said, "of all the payments I can remember. It's in my room. I'll get it."

"I wrote these down last night," he said; "I thought it would save time."

Peters took the notes and read them slowly and carefully. He seemed impressed.

"Good," he said, "very good."

"I remember best," he said, "the thing called Rolling Stone. I got a couple of trips out of it. One to Copenhagen and one to Helsinki. Just dumping money at banks. Ten thousand dollars in Copenhagen, 40,000 D-Marks in Helsinki."

Peters put down his pencil.

"Who for?" he asked.

"Good knows. We worked Rolling Stone on a system of deposit accounts. The Service gave me a plan. I remember best, I went to the Royal Scandinavian Bank in Copenhagen and the National Bank of Finland in Helsinki, deposited the money and drew a pass book on a joint account—for me in my holder's signature, I'd got that from Head Office. Later the agent gave me the pass book and a false alias and for someone else—the agent, I suppose, in his alias. I gave the banks a sample of the co-passport which he showed at the bank when he drew the money. All I knew was the alias." He heard himself talking and it all sounded so ludicrously improbable.

"What was the code name?"

"I told you—Rolling Stone. The operation covered irregular payments of \$10,000 in different currencies and in different capital towns."

"Always in capital towns?"

"Far as I know. I remember reading in the file that there had been other Rolling Stone payments before I came to the section, but in those cases Banking section got the local Resident to do it."

"These other payments that took place before you came. Where were they made?"

"One in Oslo. I can't remember where the other was."

"Was the alias of the agent always the same?"

"No. That was an added security precaution. I heard later we pinched the whole technique from the Russians. It was the most elaborate payment scheme I met. In the same way I used a different alias and of course a different passport for each trip. That would please him; help him to fill in the gaps."

"When did you make your journey?"

"Copenhagen on the 15th of June. I flew back the same night. Helsinki at the end of September. I stayed two nights there, flew back around the 28th. I had a bit of fun in Helsinki." He grinned but Peters took no notice.

Peters was writing all the time now. Leamas assumed there was a tape recorder hidden somewhere in the room but the subsequent transcription would take time. What Peter wrote down now would provide the background for this evening's telegram to Moscow, while in the Soviet Embassy in the Hague the girls would sit up all night telegraphing the verbatim transcription on hourly schedules.

"Tell me," Peters said, "there are large sums of money. The arrangements for paying them were elaborate and very expensive. What did you make of it yourself?"

Leamas shrugged.

"What could I make of it? I thought Control must have a bloody good source, but I never saw the material so I don't know. I didn't like the way it was done—it was too high-powered, too complicated, too clever. Why could they just insist that they give him the money in cash? Did they really let him cross borders on his own passport with a forged one in his pocket? I doubt it," said Leamas. It was time he cluded the issue, let him chase a hare.

"So you mean?"

"I mean, that for all I know the money was never drawn from the bank. Supposing he was a highly placed agent behind the Curtain—the money would be on deposit or cashed when he could get it. That was what I reckoned anyway. I didn't think about it all that much. Why should? It's part of our work only to know a part of the whole set-up. You know that. If you're curious, God help you."

"(If money wasn't collected, as you suggest, why all the trouble with passports?)"

"When I was in Berlin we made an arrangement for Karl Riemeck in case he ever needed to run and couldn't get hold of us. We kept a bogus West German passport for him at an address in Dusseldorf. He could collect it any time by following a prearranged procedure. It never expired—Special Travel renewed the passport and the visas as they expired. Control might have followed the same technique with this man. I don't know—it's only a guess."

"I see," Peters thought for a moment and then he asked: "What names did you use in Copenhagen and in Helsinki?"

"Robert Lang, electrical engineer from Derby. That was in Copenhagen."

"When exactly were you in Copenhagen?"

Peters asked.

"I was with you, June the 15th. I got there in the morning about 11.30."

"Which bank did you use?"

"Oh, for heaven's sake, Peters," said Leamas, suddenly angry. "The Royal Scandinavian. You've got it written down."

"I just wanted to be sure," the other replied evenly, and continued writing. "And for Helsinki, what name?"

"Robert Bennett, marine engineer from Plymouth. I was there," he added sarcastically, "at the end of September."

"Did you take the money with you from England?"

"Of course not. We just transferred it to the Resident's account in each case. The Resident drew it, met me at the airport with the money in a suitcase and I took it to the bank."

"Who's the Resident in Copenhagen?"

"Peter Jensen, a bookseller in the University bookshop."

"And what were the names which would be used by the agent?"

"Horst Karlshorst in Copenhagen. I think that was it yes it was, I remember. Karlshorst, I kept on wanting to say Karlshorst."

"Description?"

"A blond man from Klagenfurt in Austria."

"And the other? The H-skins name?"

"Fechtmann, Adolf Fechtmann from St. Gallen, Switzerland. He had a title—yes, that's right: Doctor Fechtmann, architect."

"I was with both of them speaking."

"Yes, I noticed that. But it can't be a German."

"Why not?"

"I was head of the Berlin set-up, wasn't I? I'd have been on it. A high-level agent in East Germany would have to be run from Berlin. I'd have known." Leamas got up, went to the sideboard and poured himself some whisky. He didn't bother about Peters.

"You said yourself there were special precautions, special procedures in this case. Perhaps they didn't think you needed to know."

"Don't be bloody silly," Leamas rejoined shortly. "of course I'd have known." This was the point he was coming back to now, and he thought he made them feel they knew better, gave credence to the rest of his information. "They will want to deduce in spite of you," Control had said. "We must give them the matter, but remain sceptical to their conclusions." Rely on their intelligence and conceit, on their suspicion of one another—that's what was most dangerous."

Peters nodded. As if he were confirming a melody. Peters said, "You are a very proud man, Leamas," he observed once more.

Peters left soon after that.

Peters didn't appear that afternoon, nor the next morning. Leamas stayed in, waiting with grow-

got into a small black car and drive away in the direction of the park.

Then she remembered the card. Going to the table she picked it up and held it to the light. It was expensively done, more than a policeman could afford, she thought. Engraved.

St. George, Surrey, 9 Waterloo Street, Chelsea. Then the telephone number underneath.

It was very strange.

chapter 6

LEAMAS unfasted his seat belt.

Following directly upon his decision, Leamas was aware of relief, short-lived but consoling, sustaining him for a time. It was followed by fear. He was slowing down. Control was right.

He had noticed it during the Rietveld case, early last year. Karl had sent a message: he'd got something special for him and was making one of his rare visits to Western Germany; some legal conference at Karlsruhe. Leamas had managed to get an air passage to Cologne, and picked up a car at the airport. It was still quite early in the morning and he'd hoped to miss most of the autobahn traffic to Karlsruhe but the heavy lorries were already on the move, and Leamas was stuck in half an hour, weaving between the traffic, taking risks to beat the clock, when a small car, a Fiat probably, nosed its way out into the fast lane 40 yards ahead of him. Leamas stamped on the brake, turning his headlights full on and sounding his horn, and by the grace of God he missed it; missed it by a fraction of a second. As he passed the car he saw out of the corner of his eye four children in the back, waving and laughing, and the stupid, frightened face of their father at the wheel. He drove on, cursing, and suddenly it happened; suddenly his hands were shaking feverishly, his face was burning hot, his heart palpitating wildly. He managed to pull out of the road, onto a lay-by, and led out of the car and stood breathing heavily, staring at the hurtling stream of giant lorries. He had a vision of the little car caught among them, pounded and smashed, until there was nothing left, but the front wheel was still spinning, and the blue lights flashing, and the bodies of the children, torn, like the murdered 'refugees on the road across the dunes.

He drove very slowly the rest of the way and missed his meeting with Karl.

He never drove again without some corner of his memory recalling the tousled children waving to him from the back of that car, and their father grinning the wheel like a farmer at the shafts of a hand plough.

Control would call it fever.

He sat dully in his seat over the wing. There was an American woman next to him wearing high-heeled shoes in polystyrene wrappers. He had a momentary notion of passing her, some note for the people in Berlin, but he discarded it at once. She'd think he was making a pass at her, Peters would see it. Besides, what was the point? Control knew what had happened. Control had seen it happen.

He wondered what would become of him. Control hadn't done any talking about that—only about the technique:

"Don't give it to them all at once, make them work for it. Confuse them with detail, leave things out, go back on your tracks. Be testy, be cussed, be difficult. Drink like a fish; don't give way on the ideology, they won't trust that. They want the clash of opposites, Alec, not some half-cock convert. Above all, they want to depress. The grounds prepared; we did it long ago, little things, difficult clues. You're the last stage in the treasure hunt."

He'd had to agree to do it; you can't back out of the big fight when all the preliminary ones have been fought for you.

"One thing I can promise you: its worth it. It's worth it for our special interest, Alec. Keep him alive and we want to depress the story."

It was nearly dark as they landed at Tempelhof. They were walking through the big reception hall to the main entrance when Peters suddenly seemed to alter his mind, abruptly changed direction and led Leamas to a smaller side entrance.

It was an old Mercedes 180 and he got in without a word. Peters sat beside him in the back. As they pulled out they overtook a small DKW with two men sitting in the front, twenty yards down the road. There was a telephone booth on the man was talking into the telephone, and he watched them go by, talking all the time. Leamas looked out of the

back window and saw the DKW following them. Quite, accepting, he thought.

They drove quite slowly. Leamas sat with his hands on his knees, looking straight in front of him. He didn't want to see Berlin that night. This was his last chance, he knew that. The way he was sitting, he could drive the rest of his right leg into Peters' throat, smashing the promontory of the thyrox. He could get out and run, weaving to avoid the bullets from the car behind. He would be free—there were people in Berlin who would take care of him—he could get away.

He did nothing.

It was so easy crossing the sector border. Leamas had never expected it to be quite that easy. As they approached the German checkpoint, the DKW pulled out and overtook them with the ostentatious roar of a labored engine, and stopped at the police hut. The Mercedes waited 30 yards behind. Two minutes later the red and white police led to let through the DKW and as it did so both cars drove over together.

As they crossed the 50 yards which separated the two checkpoints, Leamas was dimly aware of the new fortifications on the Eastern side of the wall. The wall, the path, the towers, the double aprons of barbed wire. Things had tightened up.

"Where are we going?" he asked Peters.

"We are there. The German Democratic Republic. It's all arranged for the rest of your life."

"I thought we'd be going further east."

"We are. We are spending a day or two here first. We thought the Germans ought to have a talk with you."

"Who will I see on the German side?"

"Does it matter?"

"Not particularly. I know most of the Abteiling people by name, that's all. I just wondered."

"Who would you expect to meet?"

"Leamas knew Fiedler all right. He knew him from the photographs on the file and the accounts of his former subordinates. A slim, neat man, quite young, smooth faced. A lithe, quick body containing a patient, retentive mind, a man seemingly without ambition for himself but generous in the destruction of others. Fiedler was a rarity in the Abteiling—he took no part in its intrigues, seemed content to live in Mundt's shadow without prospect of promotion. He could not be labelled as a member of this or that clique; even those who had worked close to him in the Abteiling could not say where he stood in its power complex."

"Fiedler is our best bet," Control had explained. They had never since dinner—Leamas, Control and Peter Guillam—in the dreary little seven-dwarfs house in Surrey where Control lived. "Fiedler is the acolyte who one day will stab the high priest in the back. He's the only man who's a matter for Mundt's head."

"—and he hates his guts. Fiedler's a Jew of course, and Mundt is quite the other thing. Not at all a good mixture. It has been our job," he declared, indicating Guillam and himself, "to give Fiedler the weapon with which to destroy Mundt. It will be yours, my dear Leamas, to encourage him to use it. Indirectly, of course, because you'll never meet him. At least I certainly hope you won't."

He had said all that and then, as if he had seemed a good joke at the time; good by Control's standards anyway.

It must have been after midnight.

For some time they had been travelling an unmarked road, partly on foot, and partly across open country. Now they stopped and a moment later the DKW drew up beside them. As he and Peters got out Leamas noticed that there were now three people in the second car.

They had partly by road and partly on foot, the building lay 30 yards back. In the headlights of the car Leamas had glimpsed a low farmhouse with walls of timber and whitewashed brick. As they reached the door Peters stopped, waiting for the other two to get out. He turned to catch them up. One of them carried a bunch of keys in his left hand, and while he fiddled with them the

other stood off, his hands in his pockets, covering him.

"Is he coming?" Peters asked one of the men in German.

The German shrugged and looked back towards the car.

"I'll come," he said: "he likes to come alone."

They went into the house, the man leading the way. It was got up like a hunting lodge, part old, part new. It was badly lit with pale overhead lights. The place had a neglected, musty air as if it had been open for a long time.

Peters sat down, and Leamas did the same. For 10 minutes, perhaps longer, they waited.

"Have you been here before?" asked Leamas.

"Yes," Fiedler replied, "several times."

"Is Fiedler good?" asked Leamas.

Peters shrugged. "For a Jew, he's not bad," he replied, and Leamas, hearing a sound from the other end of the room, turned and saw Fiedler standing in the doorway, in one hand he held a bottle of whiskey, and in the other, glasses and some mineral water.

"He was not looking at them but at the guard beside the door."

"What?" he said. He had a slight Saxonian twang: "Go away and tell the other one to bring us food."

Fiedler had spent the war in Canada. Leamas remembered that, now that he detected the accent. His father had been a German Jew, a refugee. Marxists, and it was not until 1946 that the family returned home, anxious to take part, whatever the personal cost, in the construction of Stalin's Germany.

"Hello," he added to Leamas, almost by the way, "glad to see you."

"Hello, Fiedler."

"Why? You reached the end of the road."

"What the hell d'you mean?" asked Leamas quickly.

"I mean that contrary to anything Peters told you, you are not going further east. Sorry," He sounded amused.

Leamas turned to Peters.

"Is this true?" His voice was shaking with rage. "Is it true? Tell me, I'm sorry," he added.

Peters nodded: "Yes. I am the go-between. We had to do it that way."

"Why?"

"Force majeure," Fiedler put in. "Your initial interrogation took place in the West, where only an embassy could provide the kind of link we needed. The West, that is, Germany, was no embassy in the West. Not yet. Our liaison section therefore arranged for us to enjoy facilities and communications and immunities which are at present denied to us."

"You swine," hissed Leamas. "You knew I wouldn't trust myself to your rotten Service; that was the reason, wasn't it? That was why you used a Russian."

"We used the Soviet Embassy at The Hague. What else could we do? Up till then it was our operation. That's perfectly reasonable. Neither we nor anyone else could have known that your own people in England would get on to you so quickly."

"No? Not even when you put them on to me yourselves? Isn't that what happened, Fiedler? Well, no," he always remembered to dislike them, Control had said. Then they will treasure what they got out of you."

"That is an absurd suggestion," Fiedler replied shortly. Glancing towards Peters he added something in Russian. Peters nodded and smiled.

"Goodbye," he said to Leamas. "Good luck." Leamas might not have heard.

"I should have known," said Leamas, and his voice had the odd, dead quality of a very young man. "I should have guessed you'd never have the guts to do your own dirty work. Fiedler. It's typical of your rotten little half-country and your squalid little Service that you get big uncle to do your pimping for you. You're not a country at all, you're not a government, you're a fifth-rate dictatorship of political neurotics."

Fiedler shrugged.

"Again, as I visit to the dentist, Leamas. The sooner it's all done, the sooner you can go home. Have some food and go to bed."

"You know perfectly well I can't go home," Leamas retorted. "You've seen to that. You blew me out of my mind, and you told me to go home."

"You knew damn well I'd never come here unless I had to."

Fiedler looked at his thin, strong fingers.

"This is hardly the time to philosophize," he said, "but you can't really complain, you know. All our work—yours and mine—is rooted in the theory that the whole is more important than the individual. That is why a Communist sees his secret service as the natural extension of his arm, and that is why in your own country, intelligence is shrouded in a kind of puerile anguage. The exploitation of individuals can only be justified by the collective need, can't it? Find it slightly ridiculous that you should be so indignant. We are not here to observe the ethical laws of English country life. After all," he added slyly, "your own behavior has not, from the purists' point of view, been irreproachable."

"You were watching Fiedler with an expression of disgust."

"I know your set-up. You're Mundi's poodle, aren't you? They say you want his job. I suppose you'll get it one time. It's time the Mundi dynasty ended; perhaps this is it."

"I don't understand," Fiedler replied.

"I'm your big success, aren't I?" Leamas sneered. Fiedler seemed to reflect for a moment, then he shrugged and said, "The operation was successful. What you were worried about was not achievable. We shall see. But it was a good operation. It satisfied the only requirement of our profession: It worked."

He sat down on the arm of the sofa, looked at Leamas thoughtfully for a moment and then said: "You are useless. You are right to be indignant about one thing. Who told your people we had picked you up? We didn't. You may not believe me, but it happens to be true. We didn't tell them. We didn't want them to know. We had to have them of getting you to work for us later—inches which I now realize to be ridiculous. So who told them? You were lost, drifting around, you had no address, no ties, no friends. Then how the devil did they know you were going to be picked up? Surely Ashe or Kiever, since they are both now under arrest."

"Under arrest?"

"It appears so. Not specifically for your work on your case, but there were other things. . . ."

"Well, well."

"It is true, what I said just now. We would have been content with Peters' report from Holland. You could have had your money and gone home. But you hadn't told us everything; and I want to know everything. After all, your presence here provides us with problems too, you know."

"Well, you've boomed. I know damn all—and you're welcome to it."

Fiedler picked up the bottle of whiskey and poured a little into each glass.

"We have no soda, I'm afraid," he said. "Do you like like water? I ordered soda, but they brought some wretched lemonade."

"Oh, go to hell," said Leamas. He suddenly felt very tired.

Fiedler shook his head.

"You are a very proud man," he observed, "but never mind. Eat your supper and go to bed."

The guards showed Leamas to his bedroom. They let him carry his own luggage — the same luggage that Kiever had given him before he left England — and he walked through the wide central corridor which led through the house from the front door. They came to a large double door, painted dark green, and one of the guards knocked it open. Leamas went in. He found a small barrack bedroom with two bunk beds, a chair and a rudimentary desk. It was like something in prison camp. At the far end of the room was another door. They signalled him forward again. The second room was identical to the first, but there was one bed and the walls were bare.

A sentry woke him with a breakfast: Black bread and ersatz coffee. He got out of bed and went to the window.

The house stood on a high hill. The ground fell steeply away from beneath his window, the crowns of the trees visible above the crest. Before him a spectacular in their symmetry, undulating hills, heavy with trees. There was no sign of man; not a house or church, not even the ruin of some previous habitation, the only the road, the yellow, immature road, a crayon line across the basin of the valley. There was no sound.

He had nearly finished dressing and was about to start eating the bread when Fiedler came. "I said something," he said cheerfully. "Don't let me keep you from your breakfast." He sat down on

the bed, Leamas had to hand it to Fiedler. There was an endurance, a defined purpose in his manner which Leamas could sense and admire.

"You have presented us with an intriguing problem," he observed.

"I've told you I don't know."

"Oh no," He smiled. "Oh no, you haven't. You have told us all you are conscious of knowing."

"Bloody clever," Leamas muttered pushing his food aside and lighting a cigarette—his last.

"I'll ask you a question," Fiedler continued with the exaggerated bonhomie of a man proposing a party game. "As an experienced intelligence officer, what would you do with the information you have given us?"

"What information?"

"My dear Leamas, you have only given us one piece of intelligence. You have told us about Bremek. You have told us about the dispositions of your Berlin organization about its personalities and its agents. That, if I may say so, is old hat. Accurate — yes. Good background, fascinating reading, here and there good collateral, here and there a little fish which we shall take out of the pool. But nothing I may be crude—not—15,000 worth of intelligence Not," he smiled again, "at current rates."

"Listen," said Leamas. "I didn't propose this deal—you did. You, Kiever and Peters. I didn't come crawling to your six friends, peddling old intel. You people made the running. Fiedler; you named the price and took the risk. Apart from that, I haven't had a bloody penny. So don't blame me if the operation's a flop." Make them come to you, Leamas thought.

"Isn't a flop," Fiedler replied. "It isn't finished. It can't be. You haven't told us what you know. I said you had given us one piece of intelligence. I'm talking about Rolling Stone. Let me ask you, would you do it if, if Peters or someone like us, had told you a similar story."

Leamas shrugged:

"I'd feel uneasy," he said; "it's happened before. You get an indication, several perhaps, that there's a spy in some department or at a certain level. So what? You can't arrest the whole government service. You can't lay traps for a whole department. You just sit tight and hope for more. You can't do anything. I don't know, but you can't even tell what country he's working in."

"The file—the actual file on operation Rolling Stone. What color was it?"

"I'll tell you with a red cross on it—that means limited subscription."

"Was anything attached to the outside?"

"Yes, the Caveat. That's the subscription label. With a legend saying that any unauthorized person not named on this label finding the file in his possession must at once return it unopened to Banking Section."

"Who was on the subscription list?"

"P.A. to Control, Control's secretary; Banking Section, Miss Bream of Special Registry, and Satellite Four. That's all. I think. And Special Despatch. I suppose—I'm not sure about that."

"Satellites Four? What do they do?"

"Iron Curtain countries excluding the Soviet Union and the Zone."

"You mean the GDR?"

"I mean the Zone."

"Who was in the Satellite Four at that time?"

"Oh, God, Guiliam, Haverlake, De Jong, I think. De Jong was just in from Berlin."

"Were they all allowed to see this file?"

"I don't know, Fiedler," Leamas retorted irritably; "and if I were you . . ."

"I think it is odd that the whole section was on the subscription list while all the rest of the subscribers are individuals?"

"I tell you I don't know—how could I know? I was just a clerk in all this."

"Who carried the file from one subscriber to another?"

"Secretaries, I suppose—I can't remember. It's bloody messy since . . ."

"Then why weren't the secretaries on the list?"

"Control's Secretary was." There was a moment's silence.

"No, you're right; I remember now," Leamas said, a note of surprise in his voice; "we passed it by De Jong. I don't know how it was before, but when I came I took it over and they were taken off the list."

"To whom did you pass it?"

"I . . . I can't remember. To Control's P.A., I think, to show what action we had taken or recommended."

"Who brought the file?"

"What do you mean?" Leamas sounded off balance.

"Who brought you the file to read? Somebody on the list must have brought it to you."

Leamas' fingers went to his cheek for a moment in an involuntary nervous gesture.

"Yes, they must. It's difficult, you see, Fiedler; I was putting back a lot of drink on those days; his tone was oddly conciliatory. "You don't realize how hard it is to be a spy."

"I ask you again. Think. Who brought you the file?"

Leamas sat down at the table and shook his head.

"It can't have been Control's girl, can it? You always handed the file back to Control's P.A. You said so. So those on the list must all have seen it before Control."

"Yes, that's it, I suppose."

"And there is Special Registry, Miss Bream."

"She was just the woman who ran the strong room for subscription list files. That's where the file was kept when it wasn't in action."

"Then, I said, it was silly. I said that it was Satellite Four who brought it, mustn't it?"

"Yes, I suppose it must," said Leamas helplessly, as if he were not quite up to Fiedler's brilliance.

"Who'd floor did Satellite Four work on?"

"The second."

"And Banking?"

"The fourth. Next to Special Registry."

"Do you remember who brought it up? Or do you remember, for instance, going down stairs ever to collect the file from them?"

In despair, Leamas shook his head; then suddenly he turned to Fiedler and cried:

"Yes, yes, yes! Of course I did! I got it from Peter! Leamas seemed to have woken up: His face was flushed, excited. "That's it: I once collected the file from Peter in his room. We chatted together for a while. We'd served there together, you see."

"Peter Guiliam?"

"Yes, Peter—I'd forgotten about him. He'd come back from Ankara a few months before. He was on the list, wasn't he—of course. That's it. It was Satellite Four and PG in brackets, Peter's initials. Someone else had done it before and Special Registry had glued a bit of white paper over the old name, but I'd seen it."

"What territory did Guiliam cover?"

"The Zone East Germany. Economic stuff; ran a small section, sort of backwater. He was the chap. He brought the file up to me once too, I remember that now. He didn't run agents though; don't quite know how he came into it—Peter had a couple of others were doing some research job on food shortages. Evaluation really."

"Did you not discuss it with him?"

"No, the taboos, not along with subscription files. I got a hotly from the woman in Special Registry about it—Bream—no discussion, no questions."

"But taking into account the elaborate security precautions surrounding Rolling Stone, it is possible, is it not, that Guiliam's so-called research job might have involved the partial running of this action, Rolling Stone?"

"I've told Peter," Leamas almost shouted, banging his fist on the desk, "it's just bloody silly to imagine that any operation could have been run against East Germany without my knowledge—without the knowledge of the Berlin organization. I would have known, I'd have known how many times I have to say that? I would have known!"

"Quite so," said Fiedler softly, "of course you would." He stood up and went to the window.

"You should see in the autumn," he said, looking out at it; "magnificent when the beeches are on the turn."

Fiedler loved to ask questions. Sometimes, because he was a lawyer, he asked them for his own pleasure; at other times to demonstrate discrepancy between evidence and perfective truth. He possessed, however, that persistent inquisitiveness which for journalists and lawyers is an end in itself.

They would not leave, the movie, the carcase. All the time, Fiedler probed, giving nothing. About the building in Cambridge Circus, and the people who worked there. What social class did they come from, what parts of London did they inhabit. He asked about the car, the car, the car, the car, the carcase. Most of all he asked about their philosophy.

To Leamas that was the most difficult question of all.

"What do you mean, a philosophy?" he replied, "we're not Marxists, we're nothing. Just people."

"Are you Christians, then?"

"Not many, I shouldn't think. I don't know many."

"What makes them do it, then?" Fiedler persisted: "they must have a philosophy."

"Why must they? Perhaps they don't know; don't even care. Not everyone has a philosophy," Leamas answered, a little helplessly.

"If they do not know what they want, how can they be so certain they are right?"

"Who the hell said they were?" Leamas replied irritably.

"But what is the justification then? What is it? For you, it is easy, it is your way of life, right?"

The Abtelling and organization like it are the natural extension of the party's aims. They are in the vanguard of the fight for Peace and Progress. They are to the party what the party is to socialism: They are the vanguard. Stalin said so," he smiled dryly.

"It is not fashionable to quote Stalin—but he said once half a million liquidated is a statistic, and one man killed in a traffic accident is a national tragedy."

He was laughing, you see, at the bourgeois sensitivities of the mass. He was a great cynic, but what he meant is what he said: A movement which protects itself against counter-revolution can hardly stop at the exploitation—or the elimination, Leamas—of a few individuals. It is all one, we have never pretended to be wholly just in the process of rationalizing society. Some Roman said it didn't, he, in the Christian Bible—it is expedient that one man should die for the benefit of many."

"I expect so," Leamas replied wearily.

"Then what do you think? What is your philosophy?"

"I just think the whole lot of you are swine," said Leamas vaguely.

Fiedler nodded. "That is a viewpoint I understand. It is primitive, negative and very stupid—but it is a viewpoint, it exists. But what about the rest of the Circus?"

"I don't know. How should I know?"

"I have you never discussed philosophy with them?"

"No. We're not Germans." He hesitated, then added vaguely: "I suppose they don't like communism."

"And that justifies, for instance, the taking of human life? That justifies the bomb in the crowded restaurant; that justifies your write-off rate of agents, all that?"

Leamas shrugged. "I suppose so."

"You see, for us it does," Fiedler persisted. "I myself would have put a bomb in a restaurant if it brought us further along the road. Afterwards I would draw the balance—so many women, so many children; and so far along the road, but Christians—"

"—and yours is a Christian society—Christians may not draw the balance."

"Why not. They've got to defend themselves, haven't they?"

"But they believe in the sanctity of human life. They believe every man has a soul which can be saved. They believe in sacrifice."

"I don't know. I don't much care," Leamas added. "Stalin didn't either, did he?"

Fiedler smiled; "I like the English," he said, "and to himself, my father did too. He was very fond of the English."

"That gives me a nice, warm feeling," Leamas retorted sarcastically.

They stopped while Fiedler gave Leamas a cigar and lit it for him.

They were climbing steeply now. Leamas liked the exercise, walking ahead with long strides, his shoulders thrust forward. Fiedler followed, slight and agile, like a terrier behind his master. They had reached the top of a small hill, and could look down on the solid mass of pine broken only here and there by gray clusters of beech. Across the valley Leamas could glimpse the hunting lodge, perched below the crest of the opposite hill.

"I'll sit down for a moment," said Fiedler, "then we must go back." He paused. "Tell me: these, these large sums in foreign banks—what did you think they were for? An agent from behind the Iron Curtain?"

"Yes, I thought so," Leamas replied wearily.

"Why did you think so?"

"First, it was a hell of a lot of money. Then the complications of paying him; the special

security. And of course, Control being mixed up in it."

"Did the Copenhagen or Helsinki banks ever write to you in London—to your alias, I mean?"

"I don't know. I suppose any letters would have been passed straight to Control anyway."

"The false signatures you used to open the accounts—Control had a sample of them?"

"Yes. I practised them a lot and they had samples."

"More than one?"

"Yes. Whole pages."

"I see. Then letters could have gone to the banks after you had opened the accounts, you need not have known. The signatures could have been forged and the letters sent without your knowledge."

"Yes. That's right. I suppose that's what happened. I signed a lot of blank sheets too. I always assumed someone else took care of the correspondence."

"But you never did actually know of such correspondence?"

Leamas shook his head: "You've got it all wrong," he said; "you've got it all out of proportion. There was a lot of paper going around—this was just part of the day's work. It wasn't something I gave much thought to. Why should it? It was just hush, but I've been in on things all my life where you just know a little and someone else knows the rest. Besides, paper bores me stiff. I didn't lose any sleep on it. I liked the trips of course—I drew operational substance which helped me. I didn't sit at my desk all day, wondering about Rolling Stone. Besides," he added a little shamefacedly, "I was hitting the bottle a bit."

"So you said," Fiedler commented, "and of course, I believe you."

"I don't give a damn whether you believe me or not," Leamas rejoined hotly.

Fiedler smiled.

"I am glad. That is your virtue," he said, "that is your great virtue. It is the virtue of indifference. A little resentment here, a little pride there, but that is nothing; the distortions of a false record. You are objective. It occurred to me," Fiedler continued after a slight pause, "that you could still help us to establish whether any of that money was ever in the hands of the Circus."

"There is nothing to stop you, writing to each bank and asking for a current statement. We could say you were staying in Switzerland; use an accommodation address. Do you see any objection to that?"

"It might work. It depends on whether Control has been corresponding with the bank independently, over my forged signature. It might not fit in."

"I do not see that we have much to lose. If the money has been drawn, which I agree is doubtful, we shall know where the agent was on a certain day. That seems to be a useful thing to know."

"You're dreaming. You'll never find him. Fiedler, not on that kind of information. Once he's in the West he can go to any Consulate, even in a small town, and get a visa for another country. How are you any wiser? You don't even know whether the man in the East German Who are you after?"

Fiedler did not answer at once. He was gazing distractedly across the valley.

"You said 'you are accustomed to knowing only a little, and I cannot answer your question without telling you what you should not know.' He hesitated, but Rolling Stone was an operation against us, I can assure you."

"Us?"

"The GDR." He smiled, "the Zone if you prefer. I am not really so sensitive."

He was watching Fiedler now, his brown eyes resting on him reflectively.

"But what about me?" Leamas asked. "I've done a lot of work for you, and you and Peters have you have got all I know. I never agreed to write letters to banks—it could be bloody dangerous, a thing like that. That doesn't worry you, I know. As far as you're concerned I'm expendable."

"Now let me be frank," Fiedler replied. "There are, as you know, two stages in the interrogation of a defector. The first stage in your case is nearly complete: you have told us all we can reasonably record. You have not told us whether your Service favors pins or paper clips because we haven't asked you, and because you did not consider the answer volunteered. There is a process on both sides of unconscious selection. Now it is always possible—and this is the worrying thing, Leamas—it is always entirely possible that in a month or two we shall unexpectedly and quite desperately need to know about the pins and paper clips. That is normally accounted for in the second stage—that part of the bargain which you refused to accept in Holland."

"You mean you're going to keep me on ice? How long?"

Fiedler was silent.

"Well?"

Fiedler spoke with sudden urgency. "I give you my word that as soon as I possibly can, I will tell you the answer to your question. Look, you could lie to me, couldn't you? I could say in a month or less, just to keep you sweet, But I am telling you I don't know because that is the truth. You have given us some indications: until we have run them to earth I cannot listen to talk of letters to you. But afterwards, if things are as you think they are, you will need a friend and that friend will be me. I give you my word as a German."

Leamas was so taken aback that for a moment he was silent.

"All right," he said finally, "I'll play, Fiedler, but you are stringing me along, somehow I'll break your neck."

"That may not be necessary," Fiedler replied evenly.

A man who lives a part, not to others but alone, is exposed to obvious psychological dangers. While a confidence trickster or a play-actor or a gambler can return from his performance to the ranks of his admirers, the secret agent enjoys no such relief. For him, deception is first a matter of self-defence. He must protect himself not only from within but from without, and against the most natural of impulses.

Aware of the overwhelming temptations which assail a man permanently isolated in his deceit, Leamas resorted to the course which armed him best: even when he was alone, he compelled himself to live on the personal level he assumed. Leamas without relinquishing the power of invention, identified himself with what he had invented. The qualities he exhibited to Fiedler, the restless uncertainty, the protective arrogance concealing shame, were not approximations but extensions of what he actually possessed; hence also the slight dragging of the feet, the aspect of personal neglect, the indifference to food, and an increasing reliance on alcohol and tobacco. When alone, he remained faithful to these habits. He would even exaggerate them a little, numbing to himself about the iniquities of his Service.

Only very rarely, as now, going to bed that evening, did he allow himself the dangerous luxury of admitting the great lie he lived.

Control had been phenomenally right. Fiedler was walking like a man led in sleep, into the net which Control had spread for him. It was uncanny to observe the growing identity of interest between Fiedler and Control; it was as if they had agreed on the same plan, and Leamas had been dispatched to fulfill it.

Perhaps that was the answer. Perhaps Fiedler was the special interest. Control was fighting so desperately to preserve. Leamas didn't dwell on that possibility. He did not want to know. In matters of that kind he had been woefully unwise. He knew that no conceivable good could come of his deductions. Nevertheless, he hoped to God it was true. It was possible, just possible in that case, that he would get home.

—TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT WEEK—

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